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Cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity

Letter dated 17 November 1999 from the Permanent Representative of Algeria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to request that you arrange for the distribution as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 31, the Sirte Declaration adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State of the Organization of African Unity at its fourth extraordinary session, held at Sirte, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, on 8 and 9 September 1999 (see annex).*

(*Signed*) Abdallah **Baali**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative
Chairman of the Group of African States
for the month of November 1999

* The annex is available only in the languages in which it was submitted (Arabic, English and French).

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Annex

[Original: Arabic, English and French]

Declaration adopted by the Assembly of Heads of State and Government at its fourth extraordinary session held at Sirte, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, on 8 and 9 September 1999

SIRTE DECLARATION

1. We, the Heads of State and Government of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), met at the fourth Extraordinary Session of our Assembly in Sirte, in the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, from 8 to 9 September 1999, at the invitation of the Leader of the Al Fatah Revolution, Colonel Muammar Ghaddafi, and as agreed upon during the Thirty-fifth Ordinary Session of our Summit in Algiers, Algeria, from 12 to 14 July 1999.

2. We deliberated extensively on the ways and means of strengthening our continental Organization to make it more effective so as to keep pace with the political, economic and social developments taking place within and outside our continent.

3. In this endeavour, we were inspired by the ideals which guided the Founding Fathers of our Organization and generations of Pan-Africanists in their resolve to forge unity, solidarity and cohesion, as well as cooperation, between African peoples and among African States.

4. We recall the heroic struggles waged by our peoples and our countries during the last century of this millennium for political independence, human dignity and economic emancipation. We take pride in the achievements made to promote and consolidate African unity and we salute the heroism and the sacrifices of our peoples, particularly during the liberation struggles.

5. As we prepare to enter the twenty-first century, and cognizant of the challenges that will confront our continent and peoples, we emphasize the imperative need and a high sense of urgency to rekindle the aspirations of our peoples for stronger unity, solidarity and cohesion in a larger community of peoples transcending cultural, ideological, ethnic and national differences.

6. In order to cope with these challenges and to effectively address the new social, political and economic realities in Africa and in the world, we are determined to fulfill our peoples' aspirations for greater unity in conformity with the objectives of the OAU Charter and the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community (the Abuja Treaty). It is also our conviction that our continental Organization needs to be revitalized in order to be able to play a more active role and continue to be relevant to the needs of our peoples and responsive to the demands of the

prevailing circumstances. We are also determined to eliminate the scourge of conflicts which constitutes a major impediment to the implementation of our development and integration agenda.

7. In our deliberations, we have been inspired by the important proposals submitted by Colonel Muammar Ghaddafi, Leader of the Great Al Fatah Libyan Revolution, and particularly, by his vision for a strong and united Africa, capable of meeting global challenges and shouldering its responsibility to harness the human and natural resources of the continent in order to improve the living conditions of its peoples.

8. Having discussed frankly and extensively on how to proceed with the strengthening of the unity of our continent and its peoples, in the light of those proposals, and bearing in mind the current situation on the continent, we DECIDE TO:

(i) Establish an African Union, in conformity with the ultimate objectives of the Charter of our continental Organization and the provisions of the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community.

(ii) Accelerate the process of implementing the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community, in particular:

(a) Shorten the implementation periods of the Abuja Treaty,

(b) Ensure the speedy establishment of all the institutions provided for in the Abuja Treaty, such as the African Central Bank, the African Monetary Union, the African Court of Justice and, in particular, the Pan-African Parliament. We aim to establish that Parliament by the year 2000, to provide a common platform for our peoples and their grass-root organizations to be more involved in discussions and decision-making on the problems and challenges facing our continent.

(c) Strengthening and consolidating the Regional Economic Communities as the pillars for achieving the objectives of the African Economic Community and realizing the envisaged Union.

(iii) Mandate the Council of Ministers to take the necessary measures to ensure the implementation of the above decisions and, in particular, to prepare the constitutive legal text of the Union, taking into account the Charter of the OAU and the Treaty Establishing the African Economic Community. Member States should encourage the participation of Parliamentarians in that process. The Council should submit its report to the Thirty-sixth Ordinary Session of our Assembly for appropriate action. Member States should work towards finalizing the process of ratification, where appropriate, by December 2000, in order for a constitutive Act to be solemnly adopted in the year 2001, at an Extra-Ordinary Summit, to be convened in Sirte.

(iv) Mandate our Current Chairman, President Abdelaziz Bouteflika of Algeria, and President Thabo Mbeki of South Africa, to engage African creditors on our behalf on the issue of Africa's external indebtedness, with a view to securing the total cancellation of Africa's debt, as a matter of urgency. They are to coordinate their

efforts with the OAU Contact Group on Africa's External Debt.

(v) Convene an African Ministerial Conference on Security, Stability, Development and Cooperation in the Continent, as soon as possible.

(vi) Request the Secretary General of our Organization, as a matter of priority, to take all appropriate measures to follow up the implementation of these decisions.

Done at Sirte,
Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya,
September 9, 1999 (9.9.99)